CHINA AND THE EAST EUROPEAN CRISIS
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I

In its November 13, 1956 edition, Ta Kung Pao published an editorial titled, "What Are the Similarities and Differences Between the Polish and Hungarian Incidents?" [1] This article both summarized the official Peiping position on the Polish and Hungarian events of October and November of that year, and also presaged the fitting of these events into a broader ideological framework. The latter was articulated in the published report of a Politburo meeting of the Chinese Communist Party in December and By Mao Tse-tung in his famous February, 1957, speech "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People."

It is not difficult to understand, therefore, the emphasis placed in the article on the need for a "correct understanding" of the two incidents as a "matter of great importance." [2] Indeed, its importance to the Peiping leadership was as relevant internally to its domestic situation as it was externally, in its relations not only with the Soviet Union and the Communist camp as a whole, but to the rest of Asia as well. A careful analysis of this statement should provide a key for understanding the official response of the Chinese Communist leadership to the most acute manifestations of the East European crisis of 1956.

The Chinese recognize and acknowledge in this piece the elements of a genuine "mass movement" in Poland and Hungary, replete with legitimate demands for "strengthened democracy, independence, and equality as well as (for) higher levels of material welfare for the people on the basis of expanded production." [3] The Chinese identify these demands as honest grievances whose satisfaction would "not only consolidate the people's democratic system of the two countries but also foster unity among Socialist countries." [4]

In the original character of the "mass movements" in

Poland and Hungary, as well as in their origins, the Chinese Communists see similarities in the "incidents" which occurred in the two countries. The origin of the uprisings is laid to certain parallels in the past, marked by "similar mistakes and defects of serious proportions... in the leadership work undertaken by the party and government..." [5] This, the Chinese admit, because they were not corrected in time, "caused dissatisfaction of the people (and) touched off the mass movements." [6]

Therefore, in effect, the Chinese Communist leadership frankly and openly recognized the possibility of differences (i.e., contradictions) in the relationship between a Communist party leadership in power and the people; admitted the possibility of mistakes by a Communist Party leadership; and state the need for paying heed to the satisfaction of opoular demands, much within the framework of Nikita Khrushchev's secret address of February, 1956, to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). But while the limits to such demands and the definition of such contradictions are not yet made explicit, in this context Peiping does make it clear that there are guideposts to be followed. For while the two movements may have erupted with a common character and out of a common origin, they have "followed different courses and brought about different consequences. Here, the basic differences begin." [7] Herein, lies, from Peiping's vantage point, the great lesson to be learned from these events. Herein, also, is implicitly contained a warning both to potential demonstrators within and without China itself.

For while the "mass movement" launched by the Poles was "generally speaking, orderly and healthy;" while the Polish leadership "remained vigilant at all times against imperialist and counter-revolutionary elements;" and while the Polish leaders took note of these dangers and activities" and were able to "distinguish the legitimate demands of the

broad masses from the conspiracies of a very small minority of reactionary elements," which allowed the Polish "mass movement" to follow a "revolutionary course" (and therefore to "push the socialist cause in that country"), [8] it is made clear that the "mass movement" in Hungary took a quite different twist in the perspective of the Chinese gestalt.

In Hungary the infiltration of imperialist and reactionary forces within the ranks of the masses, it is said, led to their seizure of leadership powers and that therefore the "nature of the movement underwent fundamental changes." [9] This, Ta Kung Pao reasons, led to a confusion of the situation in which "...rioters ran amuck, setting fire and looting...as well as torturing many patriots." [10]

Unlike the Polish leadership, the government of Imre Nagy in Hungary fell "under the control of reactionary forces" and then "announced a set of measures that run counter to the interests of the Hungarian people and (are) detrimental to the unity of Socialist countries." [11] Having strayed onto this path of deviation, the "mass movement" was no longer a "legitimate revolutionary mass movement." [12] In the terms of the Peiping analysis, if such a movement now turned out successfully, "Hungarian history would be turned back for several decades." Therefore, the editorial concludes, "the Hungarian incident is basically different in nature from the Polish incidents." [13] In other words, the Hungarian events threatened to overturn the established Communist control in that country, to provoke an open break in the wall of Communist unity, while the Polish leaders had been able to avert such consequences.

The lesson drawn from this analysis by the Chinese editorial writers would lead us to believe that China was at this time most concerned with the implications the Hungarian events held for its own domestic scene: "We must know how to distinguish the legitimate demands of the broad

masses from the conspiratorial activities of the minority. Facts have shown that it is very necessary to distinguish friends from enemies and to impose determined and revolutionary dictatorship to the enemy." [14] It is later, in the December Politburo meeting and the February speech---almost one year after Khrushchev had unleashed his pandora box of anti-Stalinism at the CPSU Twentieth Congress---that Mao rationalizes this into an ideological fabric designed not only for suitable application within China itself, but as a formula to be fitted for relations between Communist states as well.

To recognize this seemingly dual policy of the CCP leadership to the East European events is not to imply that such a dichotomy was so clear-cut from the beginning of the crisis, or indeed, even that such a dichotomy of policy is more real than apparent. From the first turbulent days in October the official Communist party newspaper, JenMin JihPao (People's Daily), as well as the carefully controlled press throughout the country, reported faithfully and in detail the drama which unfolded in Poland and Hungary. The deliberations of the Polish and Hungarian Communist Parties, the governmental changes with changes which brought Wladyslaw Gomulka and Imre Nagy to power, and the beginning, progress, and end of the bloody Hungarian revolt were given wide play.

While there is some evidence that at the outset the popular demands and party changes in Hungary and Poland were lumped together as one, and healthy, phenomenon the Chinese wasted little time in approving both Soviet armed excursions in suppressing the Hungarian uprisings. On October 26, two days after the initial intervention by Soviet troops, the Hsinhua (New China) News Agency (NCNA), the official news agency for Communist China, strongly supported the actions of Soviet troops and condemned the anti-Soviet revolt as an "armed revolt engineered by gangs of counter-revolutionary bandits." [15]

Throughout this initial phase of the Hungarian episode there is presented in the Chinese press a by and large complete accouht of governmental and party changes and statements, unaccompanied by any official policy statements, except for the labeling of the armed outbursts as being inspired and led by reactionary and imperialistic elements who have subverted a demonstration of the people, and the stamp of approval given the Soviet use of armed suppression. With the ascendance of Nagy, the temporary stabiliaation of the conflict, and the announced withdrawal of Soviet trrops, the first Chinese pronouncement of note appears and greets with approval the October 30 declaration of the USSR.[16] It appears that the Chinese leadership was dutifully waiting for the Soviets to take their stand and set the tone to be followed. At this stage, at least, the leadership role was left entirely to the USSR. The severe character, and at the same time the delicate nature, of the East European developments, (together with the Soviet Union's apparent inability to [illegible] situation [illegible]), probably induced the CCP

From Peiping's announcement it appeared that while Gomulka's government had the unqualified support of the CCP leadership, a watch and wait attitude had been adopted towards Nagy. While stating its support for the Soviet declaration, the Chinese leaders plainly place the onus of responsibility on the Soviets as well. It emphasizes the importance of the "five principles" for relationships between states, socialist and non-socialist, as well as the need for correcting mistakes of the past; mistakes which have created unnecessary tensions and estrangements between socialist countries. The government announcement elaborates that "some of these countries have been unable to build socialism better in accordance with their historical circumstances and special features...the handling of the 1948-49 Yugoslav situation and the recent happenings in Poland are enough to illustrate this."[17]

But what is most significant here is the fact that the

People's Republic of China notes that the demands of the people of Hungary and Poland are "completely proper," [18] and that the Poles and their leaders have "taken notice of the activities and danger of reactionary elements who attempted to undermine the people's democratic system and unity among socialist countries." [19] Thus, while seemingly siding with the cause of the satellites against the USSR, it seems to be a significant omission that the people and leaders of Hungary are excluded from this latter observation. To many, this Peiping proclamation was taken as clear support for the anti-Kremlin groups in the satellite countries, but three days later the regime found it necessary to qualify and further define its stand.

In a JenMin RihPao editorial on November 4, an appraisal of the Hungarian situation was finally put forward. The editorial, obviously reacting to the further sharpening of the crisis in Budapest, criticized the Nagy government for "going against the Socialist principles of the Hungarian People's Republic by unilaterally declaring Hungary's abrogation of the Warsaw Treaty." [20] It noted that "it is very painful for the Chinese people to see a handful of counter-revolutionary conspirators attempting to use Hungary to breach the unity of the Socialist countries..." [21]

Thus, the government's official position as stated in the November 1 release was clarified and the Chinese stand crystallized. In the ensuing days, Peiping was to unreservedly declare its support for Soviet intervention "to save socialism" and for the Revolutionary Government of Peasants and Workers headed by Janos Kadar, and proclaim the "victory of socialism."

Later, in a JenMin JihPao editorial of November 10, the reasons for the failure of the Nagy government are spelled out in several points, among which are included: the reorganization of the government to broaden its base and include non-Communist parties; the disbandment of public security forces; the release of political prisoners, including

Cardinal Mindzsenty; the withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact; a request for "big Four" aid to guarantee the neutrality of Hungary; and what in effect constituted the "giving of complete control to the counter-revolutionaries." [22]

If the Chinese reaction to the events in Hungary presents a more or less visible pattern of pragmatic response to the policies formulated by the Nagy government, their posture during the Polish struggle is somewhat more clouded. Indeed, the fact that the events in Poland occurred, ostensibly, over a longer period of time and the fact that the Chinese leaders had direct contact with the leaders of the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP) (Communist Party) during the course of the crisis, perhaps suggests a more complicated role for Peiping in this affair.

Though by no means authoritative, it is possible to piewe together from New York Times reports the threads of a drama which took place in Peiping and Warsaw from mid-September to mid-November, 1956. If authentic, it would indicate a great interest in, and solid support for, the Polish Communists' efforts in attaining increased internal independence from the Soviet Union, by the Chinese leadership.

During the occasion of the Chinese Communist Party's Eighth Congress, which took place in Peiping during September, Edward Ochab, the first secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party (Communist Party) and one of Poland's representatives to the Congress, is reported to have held discussions with CCP first-secretary, Mao Tse-tung. [23]

Reportedly, Mao told Ochab that the Poles should go ahead in their attempts to obtain internal independence and develop their own socialist system as the Yugoslavs had dohe. The timing of this reported meeting is particularly significant since it would have taken place at about the same time that Tito was meeting with Khrushchev and other Soviet leaders. At that meeting, the Soviet leadership tried to convince Tito of the dangers to world communism of too

liberal an interpretation of Moscow's promise of equality among all Communist parties. This had been made by the Russians in a Moscow declaration, and signed by Khrushchev and Tito the previous June. This declaration carried with it the acknowledgment of "different roads of socialist development in different countries." Khrushchev and company, in essence, were seeking support from Tito in reaction to the evidences of growing unrest in Hungary and Poland.

Therefore, if the reports of such a meeting between Ochab and Mao are true, Mao's encourggement would seem to be working contrary to the very objectives sought by the Soviet leaders in their meeting with Tito, and offer evidence for Peiping's siding against the USSR in the Communist world's ideological and power struggle over the number of roads to socialism. Reference is also made in this report to Mao's indication to the Polish Party representative of his disapproval of the Soviet effort to re-establish a single Soviet road.

Attention given (in) the Chinese press to the events taking place in Poland during the following days seems to support the possibility of such an attitude on Peiping's part. Gomulka's speeches are reprinted en toto, as are Sejm discussions and descriptions of support in Polish factories, universities and other organizations for the decisions of the Central Committee of the PUWP under Gomulka's leadership. On October 28, alongside of a report of the support of Polish workers and peasants for the resolutions passed by the Eighth Plenum of the Central Committee (On Current Political and Economic Tasks) a large picture of Gomulka is prominently displayed.

Then, on November 12 in another NY Times dispatch from Warsaw,[24] is reported the sending by Mao of a secret message reassuring Poland of Peiping's continued support for its demands for independence from Soviet political domination. The prompting of such a note appears to have come from Warsaw's gloomy reaction to the enthusiastic Chinese support of

the ruthless Soviet action in Hungary from the time of its second armed intervention on November 4.

According to NY Times sources, Mao is said to have differentiated between Communist China's attitude toward Hungary and that on Poland, during a meeting with the Polish ambassador to Peiping. Reportedly, Mao called in the Polish official and assured him that China had not withdrawn its backing for the Polish Communist Party in its struggle with Moscow.

However, for all the real or apparent proclamations of support for the Polish course by the Chinese leaders, it is worth noting that the Peiping position toward Hungary carried with it certain implicit warnings which the Poles could not fail to discern, nor afford to ignore. The very acts of the Nagy regime which accounted for its condemnation from Peiping, established certain limits beyond which the Polish leadership could not go if it was to expect the continued backing of Mao and his associates.

In fact, it appears from the announcements of the Chinese government and the editorials in the Chinese press, that the CCP line on Nagy was not settled until after October 30, when the severity of the crisis and unrest in Hungary pushed the government outside the "framework of socialist unity." It is with the declaration by the Nagy government of its intended withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, its plea for neutrality and its inclusion into the government of non-Communist parties together with a promise of free and secret elections in the future, that the Chinese abandon their watchful approach to the Hungarian situation and draw clear lines of differentiation in their policies toward the satellitesdemands.

Throughout, it seems as if the Chinese leadership was prepared to support the liberalization of relations between the Soviet Union and its East European satellites. It certainly went a considerable way in acknowledging mistakes in the past in these relationships and in backing the need for

their correction in line with the five principles of "mutual respect for sovreignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in the internal affairs of others, equality and mutual behefit, and peacful co-existence." [25]

Moreover, the Chinese went further to imply that the Soviet Union was guilty of "big-nation cauvinism" in the relations between "bigger nations" and "smaller nations." [26] (And, not only implied this "error" to the USSR, but as a danger against which the Chinese themselves must always guard against.)

But the fact remains that, whatever Peiping's reasons, the boundaries of liberalization and internal democratization were clearly demarcated by the overriding requirements of serving a united and solid Communist camp and for the maintenance of the role of the Communist party as one of leadership and dominance. To forsake these principles, of proletarian internationalism without and the dictatorship of the proletariat within, was to act against the people, and therefore to invite the protection of their interests by whatever means were necessary.

What's more, according to the CCP, not only could all errors be corrected and eliminated, but in fact they either had been already, or were in the process of being, corrected. Therefore, as far as the CCP was concerned, "this kind of thing can never be a pretext for breaking the unity of the socialist countries and friendship with the Soviet Union." [27] If the Chinese pronouncements were clear in the priority they placed on "socialist unity," and the implied price for its abandonment, it was adamant in its call for friendship with, and recognition of the leadership of, the Soviet Union.

In its editorial of November 3, the JenMin JihPao begins with declaring that "The unity of the socialist countries headed by the great Soviet Union is the most important support of world peace and human progress." [28] In naerly every

government statement, the phrase "socialist unity" is coupled with the designation of the Soviet Union at its center. And as if to give the implications of this example an ominous ring, the Chinese Communists declared, "the friendship between the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union is forever unshakable, for it affects the fundamental interests of the 800,000,000 people of the two countries. If these interests are jeopardized, this would in turn undoubtedly jeopardize others." [29]

In late November, though, Poland did gain what appeared to be significant political, economic and military concessions from negotiations with the Soviet Union. The Chinese hailed this as setting "a good example for correct relations among the Socialist countries." [30] Furthermore, it stated, "whatever went wrong in relations between the Soviet Union and Hungary will be resolutely put right by the Soviet Union... as it has done in the case of Poland." [31] This contingency however, was pointed out as dependent upon the removal of "subversive forces of imperlaism" and the "restoration of social order" in Hungary.

In the end, just as "bigger nations" were to avoid the pitfalls of "big-nation chauvinism," "smaller nations" had to be similarly wary of the mistakes of nationalism. And, "if these mistakes are avoided, friendship and solidarity based on equality will undoubtedly be further strengthened and developed," so concluded Chinese reasoning at this time.[32]

As has been mentioned, the mainstreams of Chinese thinking on the East European crisis and their broader interpretation were to be further developed and encased in a more definitive, or if you like, ideological, framework, in the body of two important articles. The first was published in the Peiping JenMin JihPao on December 29, 1956, and the second was a speech delivered by Mao before an enlarged session of the Supreme State Conference on February 27, 1957, but not published until the following June. The December article was reported in a supplement to People's China as

being prepared bybthe Editorial Department of the JenMin JihPao on the basis of a discussion at an enlarged Meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CCP. It is enough here to mention their existence, they are discussed in the following section.

As a final note to this more or less chronological edifice, account should be taken of the extended swing through Southeast Asia begun by Chinese Communist Premier Chou En-lai beginning in mid-November. Chou departed from Peiping on November 18 with an itinerary which included the Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, India, Burma, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal and Ceylon.

Though it is probable that the journey was planned well in advance of the outbreaks in Eastern Europe, this by no means determined the content of Chou's message once he had arrived. The central themes of the Chinese premier's address to his Asian neighbors seemed in large part to constitute a peace offensive designed to offset the Soviet wake left in Hungary and to reap the advantages of the French and British fiasco in the Suez.

Chou emphasized two dominant lines: the error of "big-nation chauvinism" and the reaffirmation of the "five principles" for relations between nations. Carefully avoiding any questions on Soviet actions in Hungary, Chou proclaimed that "big-nation chauvinism has to be opposed by all nations, particularly by the big powers." [33] In an effort to provide assurance that in the future the Chinese would have no inclination to act in a similar manner, Chou coupled this motif with support for the so-called "five principles" in every country he visited.

The Chinese were obviously aware that almost all of non-Communist Asia was disturbed by the Soviet suppression of freedom in Hungary and that a logical extension of such uneasiness could be directed toward Peiping as well. However,

while in Pakistan preparing to embark on the final leg of his journey, Chou apparently received an urgent call to return to Peiping and subsequently was shuttled off to Moscow for conferences with the Soviet leaders and an impromptu excursion through Eastern Europe.

That Chou's original plans were in fact interrupted without previous warning is lent credence by the fact that no mention is made at any time in Chinese statements of such a visit, in addition to the abruptness of the change itself. In fact, the initial Chinese announcement of Chou's plans to proceed to Moscow mention only that he will visit the Soviet capital and warsaw. It appears that the decision to send Chou to Budapest, as well, was a last-minute addition decided upon in Moscow.

While the latter junket was more likely the result of Soviet initiative and for the benefit of the Moscow leadership, the content, though perhaps not the origin, of Chou's Asian countries (which was completed after his East European tour had ended) was more the product of the Chinese' own decision-making and assessments.

Though the possible significance of Chou's travels will be taken up subsequently, it can be noted here that it provides some indication that the impact of the events in the satellites held as much meaning for the foreign relations of the Peiping regime as it held for the Soviet Union, and may help to partially explain the Chinese response to these developments in that realm. This implication might be further extended when placed in the light of the visit paid to Southeast Asia by Khrushchev and Bulganin in 1955. It could be that the Chinese were anxious to balance Soviet influence, among Asian Communist parties as well as among some of their own. If so, this non-Communist leaders, with provided them with an extraordinary opportunity.

II

One interpretation of the Chinese response to the East European crisis has been to credit the Chinese Communists with an attempt at meeting the dangers of ideological confusion by recreating the unity of the Communist camp on a new theoretical plane.

The basis for this analysis are the two significant Peiping pronouncements of December 29, 1956 and February 27, 1957. The first appears to hold greater relevance to an understanding of China's position internationally. The February sppech by Mao, on the other hand, directs its emphasis more to the Chinese domestic scene.

The December report has been viewed from many points of departure. In line with the proposition that it signifies an attempt by Mao to inject new ideological vaccine into an ailing Communist body, it is seen as the declaration of a new norm intended to fill the vacuum left by the demise of Stalinism; as an attempt to provide a more rational, and thereby more cohesive, framework for the relationships between Communist states, and therefore between Communist parties in power.

This new relationship would apply the elasticity of the Chinese domestic scene to the international relations within the socialist camp. It implies a certain area of diversity within unity, with the implication that attention must and should be paid to national requirements and differences but that at least lip-service, if not in fact subservience, must be paid to the correctness of Soviet foreign policy and to the concept of a unified socialist bloc headed by the USSR.

A further extehsion of this view holds that the text of the Chinese report calls for a measure of real independence for non-Soviet Communist parties. It stresses that the key passages in the message are those which call for equality

and mutual consultation, which declare that "solidarity among Communist parties of all countries is strengthened when they maintain relations on a basis of equality and when they attain unity of views and of action by means of real, and not formal, consultations. On the other hand, if...they forcibly impose their views on one another or replace comradely suggestion and criticism by interference in the internal affairs of one another, then their solidarity will be harmed."

Other analyses of the Peiping pronouncement emphasize it as an expression of unqualified support for the Soviet Union and as a renewed justification for the Soviet action in Hungary. In this context, it is pointed out as a political move coming on the eve of Chou En-lai's visit to Moscow and Eastern Europe. Chinese support serves not only as a boost to Khrushchev in Soviet relations with the satellites, but to Khrushchev's own position within the Soviet hierarchy. (Discussions had taken place among the Soviet high command in Moscow in December which have been interpreted as an opening foray towards an effort to dispose of the Khrushchev leadership. In this light, Peiping's acceptance of the Soviet invitation to come to Moscow and the satellites not only is an expression of support for the present leadership but also is what appears to be implicit backing of the least "Stalinist" of the policy alternatives as debated within the CPSU Politburo.)

The focal point here is on the diminution of satellite independence and a general halt to liberalization, together with vigorous acknowledgment of Moscow as the center and leader of the Communist world. Further significance is attached to the attacks on Tito and the "upgrading of Stalin" bythe Chinese, in what the NY Times describes as the most effusive praise given Stalin in Moscow (the Peiping report cob

vered more than two of Pravda's six pages on

on the day of its appearence) since the CPSU Twentieth Congress; and to the timing of the article itself, coming as it

did at a time when the Soviet leadership was busily engaged in repudiating doctrinal "heresies" and generally clamping down on rebellion against its views.

It should be noted that both of these views assess the same objectives to the Chinese statement, the hope of the CCP for insuring stability within the Communist camp at a time when serious divisive forces were at work. What is perhaps important, however, is the fact that both these views could be deduced, and held tenable, from the text of the Peipéng report.

Indeed, while the report lays down certain fundamental experiences of the Soviet Union as universally applicable and valid in the course of socialist revolution and construction, the "cause of the proletariat in a given country will triumph only if the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism is properly applied in the light of its special national features." In what is perhaps a significant bit of retrospection, the Chinese recall that "between 1931 and 1934 in the history of the Communist Party of China there were doctrinaires who refused to recognize China's specific characteristics, (who) mechanically copied certain experience of the Soviet Union, and caused serious reverses to the revolutionary forces of our country."

But, again, at the same time that the CCP leadership warns against the errors of "doctrinairism," opposition to this phenomenon does not mean tolerance of "revisionism," and any shortcomings in this respect must also be overcome. Therefore, to attempt to revise these universal truths on the pretext of combatting "doctrinairism," is to deny that there is a demarcation line between the proletarian and bourgeois dictatorships, between the socialist and capitalist systems and between the socialist and imperialist camps.

In essence, then, Communist parties must, at one and the same time, seek unity with each other as well as maintain their

respective independence, proletarian internationalism must be combined with the representation of the legitimate national interests and sentiments of the people of the various countries. Moreover, internal development must also not exclude certain universal practices. In addition, it is not only "big-nation chauvinism" that hinders international proletarian unity but the fact also that small countries have distrusted big ones and become hostile to them; while overcoming the former, it is also necessary to overcome nationalist tendencies in smaller countries.

In short then, the Peiping report is an object lesson in ambivalence. And while in theory, the national interests of a socialist state may mesh with "proletarian internationalism," in practice there must remain a final arbiter to resolve differences if such unity is to be maintained. This very ambivalence then serves as a convenient lever for, as well as a rationale for, recognizing the need for the unchallenged leadership of the Soviet Union. The framework which the Chinese Communists are in fact providing is one in which the final reckoning as to the relations between Communist countries, and perhaps even the actions of Communist parties within their own countries, is still left in the hands of the Moscow leadership. This, however, is modified to the extent that Moscow is now more dependent upon China and the satellites for support of its position.

In a sense, the Chinese Communist leadership stood between two dangers, as it viewed the international scene in November-December, 1956. On the one hand is their concern over their relations with the Soviet Union, and perhaps an inherent and historically conditioned fear of Soviet chauvinism (which doesn't neeessarily have to be expressed in territorial terms). On the other hand are not only the real prospects of the decomposition of the Communist camp, but the dangers as well of growing internal unrest, and the relationahip between the two.

In line with the need to meet its internal situation

head-on, Mao delivered his speech "On Contradictions" to members of the CCP in February. It is not necessary here to go over again the Maoist concept of contradictions, those between "ourselves and the enemy" and those "among the people," and their relationship to the Hungarian events. What might be useful, however, is to briefly point out two parallel implications in the December and February proclamations which seemed to provide an underlying base for their ambivalent nature and which seemed to augur for the future.

First, the basic, antagonistic, contradiction at the present time, externally is that between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp, just as internally, it is between the "people" and the counter-revolutionary enemies (i.e., those who, as in Hungary, seek to use the legitimate demands and criticisms of the "people" as an excuse for reimposing a "fascist hell"). But, in the present phase of socialist construction within the Communist camp, the threat of the latter has been reduced to a small minority. The overriding need is to combat the intensified encroachments and threats of the imperialist camp, as personified in the Hungarian and Suez crises. For this reason, the solidarity of the socialist camp is the absolute priority to which all others must be subordinated. The greater conflict is with imperialism and with this in focus it is clear that to meet this challenge the countries must bring their own national interests in line with its requirements. Proletarian internationalism, therefore, is the highest value.

Secondly, is an emphasis on the role of the Communist party and its leadership under the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the December speech, Mao is apparently content to include this among five fundamental truths which he offers of the Soviet experience which are universally applicable. By June (it is probable that this section was not included in the original February speech), it is cited as one of the two most important of six criteria for judging the "correctness" of open discussion and criticism. Therefore, for all its ambivalence,

Peiping assumes a categorical stance on the questions of socialist unity, on the basis of a sharp definition of the current international situation, and the dominant role of the party.

The effect of these consistencies are obvious enough. In addition, it seems to indicate a trend away from liberalization within the bloc and a tightening up all along the line. There are indications also that the demise of liberalization, however, ran a slower course within China itself.

In the last analysis, this then is simply what the Chinese Communists probably saw as the most sensible course to take, in line with the realities of the situation and their own interests (in which ideology plays a part). The very fact that the Peiping declarations were subject to varied interpretation underscores its ambivalent nature. And its equivocal position underlies the impression that the Chinese leadership was publicly scratching its head, pondering out loud the various alternatives it faced. The Chinese regime was unquestionably scared by the Hungarian events. They had not expected it to go so far. Neither were they reassured in their domestic position by the clear evidences of dissatisfaction and unrest within.

This is supported by numerous signs of intellectual and student activity and unrest. Indeed, Mao himself refers quite openly, in his February address, to restiveness among the intellectuals. In addition, September and November had seen discussions on the role of democratic parties in the Chinese press, and of the multi-party system as well.

Some index to the CCP concern over student disquiet can be gathered from the heightened pace of editorial activity by the ChungKuo ChingNien Pao (China's Youth Newspaper), the official youth publication of the Communist regime. Numerous pieces are direct appeals for understanding the lessons of the Hungarian events, as the regime sees them. One example of this is a November editorial which says in part: "From the Hungarian incident we can see clearly that democracy

should have a certain sphere. Not realizing the sphere of democracy, the Nagy government gave way to and carried out a 'benevolent' policy toward counter-revolutionaries...democracy is applied to the people and dictatorship must be applied vis-a-vis counter-revolutionaries." [34]

The Chinese regime was beginning to realize the real dangers of the East European crisis, especially when compounded by the unexpected zeal with which criticism of the party and the government had been carried out under the "Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom" campaign since May, 1956. Therefore, this ambivalent quality of its position still leaves the final definitions and determinations to the Communist leadership alone, internally, and to a united socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union (and to a greater degree than ever before dependent on Peiping's support), internationally. It appears that faced with several dilemmas, the Chinese Communist leadership wasn't quite sure what to do. But, for the time being, these seemed willing to settle for a recognition, within well-defined limits, of a certain degree of internal autonomy within the framework of socialist unity as long as the image and stature of that unity remained unimpaired. That the future would bring a steady move in the direction of re-establishing the acceptance of a single road to Communism concept, is outside the bounds of this paper's discussion.

III

In attempting to point out historical corollaries in the experiences of nations and men, there are inherent limitations. Obviously, no two historical experiences in either case are identical. Indeed, it is this very fact that imposes the strain of national diversity and autonomy upon the concept of a monolithic, unified socialist camp. National leaders such as Mao Tse-tung, Wladyslaw Gomulka, and Imre Nagy have had to pay heed to the reality that the "creative experience of the Soviet Union" on the road to socialism is not necessarily a universal one.

To be sure, there are differences in both the historical periods, circumstances, and in their relationships with the Soviet Union, between China of the 1920-30's and Poland and Hungary of 1956-57. Communist theoreticians especially, I suppose, would point out that the historical context and hence meaning of the two periods in which these national Communist leaders operated were entirely different, and that therefore each had its own, and different, set of precepts and dictates. That, indeed, while the actions of Mao were those of a Communist leader seeking state power, i.e., a bourgeois-democratic revolution, Gomulka and Nagy were Communist leaders in power, and in countries which presumably were already building socialism.

But, in effect, it might also be maintained that Mao's efforts to obtain the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party were in fact similar to the quest for party leadership in which Gomulka and Nagy were engaged. That basically, what is involved is a struggle for power, both within the national party and with Moscow. Furthermore, it could also be proposed that the relationship between the CCP and the Comintern in the twenties and thirties were not unlike the later relationship between the Communist parties of Poland and Hungary with Moscow after 1948 and until some time after the death of Stalin in 1953.

It is not the intent here, however, to argue these differences and similarities. Rather, it is contended that the existence of such differences does not negate the presence of certain similarities in the past experience of the Chinese leader Mao; and that these similarities may have had a conditioning effect on Mao's thinking and attitudes in the fall of 1956 which contributed, at least in his initial orientation to the problem, to a more understanding and favorable response to the difficulties and efforts on the part of the Polish leader Gomulka, and for a time at least, the Hungarian leader Nagy.

Two problems of particular relevance to the recent events in Eastern Europe seem to emerge from an examination of Mao's past and the historical development of the CCP. These are the questions of an indigenous Communist leadership vis-a-vis Moscow and Soviet-trained national leaders, and of the concept of the road to socialism, again involving the question of the relationship of the national Communist movement with Moscow.

From almost the very beginning of the Chinese Communist Party, Comintern policies which were imposed upon the party leadership were a dismal, and nearly irrevocable, failure. As early as the Second Party Congress in 1922, the will of the Comintern was clamped down on the CCP leaders, a leadership which was changed and chosen with the moods and needs of Moscow. Though it is not necessary to discuss here in detail, it is useful to keep in mind the fact that Chinese policy became a pawn in the bitter rivalry between Stalin and Trotsky which took place during much of this period, and thus was consistently tailored not to the needs of the Chinese but specifically to the requirements of the Moscow combatants. The tragic results are well known.

When the Comintern delegate, Maring, forced the CCP Central Committee in 1922 to adopt his plan for having individual CCP members join the "multi-class" Kuomintang (KMT), it marked the end of an era in the history of Chinese Communism;

"the end of a period of youthful purism and isolation; for after August, 1922, purity of dogma yeilded to practical compromise. This transformation was wrought by an outside force---by the first impact of Comintern discipline on the CCP leadership." [35] The CCP-KMT alliance which followed was the first of the disastrous policies contrived by the Comintern to suit the needs of Moscow. But what is more significant, it perhaps served as an object lesson for future CCP rationalizations of their own when circumstances later dictated the choice between expedient practice and ideological purity.

During the ensuing years, Mao in effect stood opposed to the Comintern's chosen instruments in China. According to his own account, Mao's disagreements with the party leadership on agrarian policy began as early as 1925. [36] For example, when the Executive Committee of the Comintern (ECCI) in December, 1926, made explicit that reolutionary peasant committees were in themselves not enough, that the proletariat was the only class which could solve the agrarian question, Mao's response was silence. After the utter collapse of CCP alliances with first the "right-KMT" (which resulted in the near-annihilation of the party by Chiang Kai-shek's "white terror" campaigns and started the process of almost complete CCP alienation from the urban proletariat) and then the "left-KMT" Wuhan government, there followed the Comintern-created "Li Li-san line" of planned urban uprisings. Mao, however, persisted in organizing peasant armies in his home province of Hunan and in carrying out agrarian reforms. For his efforts he was several times reprimanded by the Central Committee for "deviations" and once even dismissed from his position as an alternated member of the Politburo, in November, 1927. [37]

From the First Congress of 1921 to the Fifth in 1927, the CCP hierarchy had never considered the peasantry a decisive factor in the Chinese revolution. Mao's efforts, and accomplishments, in organizing the Hunan peasantry, had not won him any key position in the party leadership. But while the

strength and prestige of the CCP continued to sink under the weight of the Comintern line in the final years of the twenties and early thirties, Mao's efforts in the Soviet areas of South China began to emerge as a powerful independent force in the Communist movement.

This served as the background for the climactic clash between Mao and other seasoned CCP veterans with Li Li-San's successor, Wang Ming and the "Returned Student Faction." In this conflict the lines can be clearly drawn in the clash between an indigenous, hardened leadership and a Moscow trained and controlled group of leaders. The "Twenty-Eight Bolsheviks" with Wang Ming (whose real name is Ch'en Shao-yu) as their acknowledged leader, had spent all the years since 1926 in study at the Sun Yat-sen Academy in Moscow. They had distinguished themselves, above all, by the ardor with which they had defended the Stalinist cause against all signs of heterodoxy. [38] And they had been far from the scene of some of the most bitter revolutionary battles. As related in Schwartz's book, "These fellows," he (Li Ang) said, "were all young students who...had made no contribution whatsoever to the revolution. While we were carrying on the revolution they were still suckling at their mothers' breasts...these men who were infants in terms of revolutionary background were now sent back to be leaders of the Chinese revolution!" [39]

The demise of the Shanghai-centered Wang Ming leadership, which constituted the official CCP hierarchy, and the subsequent acquisition of party control by Mao---though fascinating in and of itself---is extraneous to this discussion except in one detail. That point is the fact that in assuming the reins of control, Mao not only faced the opposition of a Soviet-backed and weaned faction, but also was forced to wind his way through a more complicated struggle with factions within the Soviet areas themselves.

The Wang Ming leadership, however, climaxes a series of Comintern impositions of policies and personnel upon the CCP

It showed a blatant disregard for the indigenous leaders and capped a history of failure and frustration for Moscow and its China maneuvers. Thus, Mao had seen the repeated failure of the CCP in its effort to capture, or create its own, effective revolutionary movement. He had seen how the enormous "scissors" between the Comintern line and Chinese realities and finally the putting into control of the party the "Twenty-Eight Bolsheviks" had gradually undermined the faith of party members---and had led to the disintegration of the CCP outside the Soviet areas he and his colleagues had built up in the Hunan-Kiangsi hinterland on the basis of an indigenous policy streamlined to fit the needs of Chinese conditions.

However, it should be noted that Mao remained relatively quiescent and aloof while he went his own way in the agrarian districts of the southern provinces and it may be presumed that he gave his formal approval to directives which probably ran contrary to his convictions. Mao's use of this guileful art is what the Chinese describe as "open respect, hidden rebellion." Such action may be regarded as good party discipline, but throughout the critical years of his rise to power, Mao proved a master in the use of sham compromise. This disposition may also hold relevance to Mao's thinking in 1956.

Thus, Mao Tse-tung and the core of the present CCP leadership, learned the hard way that "in spite of the Marxist claim to universality, it is evident that Marxism-Leninism has had its success in China roughly in proportion as it has fitted into the Chinese scene, adapted itself to Chinese needs and conditions, and taken advantage of specific Chinese opportunities." [40] From this experience can be drawn numerous corollaries to the East European situation of 1956, especially as it focuses on Poland and Wladyslaw Gomulka.

As Mao sat in Peiping during the fall of 1956, his conscious or subconscious reflections might have brought to mind the